

Wisniewski Introduces Bill to Improve Port Authority Governance

By Terrence Dopp | October 23, 2014

The head of a panel investigating politically motivated traffic jams at the George Washington Bridge wants to scale back control that [New Jersey](#) and [New York](#) governors have over the agency running the span.

New Jersey Assemblyman John Wisniewski, a Democrat from Sayreville, introduced a bill today that would remove the veto power governors have over decisions by the [Port Authority](#) of New York and New Jersey. It would also give the legislatures of both states more power in making appointments. The probe is continuing, he said today.

"We knew it was an agency out of control, but I don't think we knew the context of just how out of control it was," Wisniewski said in an interview.

Governor [Chris Christie](#), a 52-year-old Republican who won a second term in November, has seen his favorability rating drop to a record low after an aide and ally arranged the traffic jams. **The percentage of voters in a Rutgers-Eagleton poll this month holding a negative view of him outnumbering those who see him positively.**

The measures would "address the numerous and systemic failures of the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey," Wisniewski said in a statement introducing a bill. Lawmakers in New York and New Jersey would need to approve the measure.

'Growing Tired'

Christie has denied any role in ordering lane closings at the world's busiest bridge last September that choked traffic in [Fort Lee](#), whose Democratic mayor didn't endorse the governor's re-election.

[Michael Drewniak](#), a spokesman for the governor, said in an e-mail he hadn't seen the bill and declined to comment on it.

Last month, Christie said he was "growing tired" of the committee's investigation and said it should be ended. A separate inquiry by U.S. Attorney Paul Fishman has also failed to find a direct link between him and the closings, Christie said.

"The fact is that they've been digging around for eight months now and have found absolutely nothing," Christie told reporters. "Wrap up your work. Do your job."

The Port Authority runs the New York City area's three major airports, four bridges, the Times Square bus terminal, commuter rail, two tunnels, ports and the World Trade Center in [Lower Manhattan](#).

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